Critical Thinking
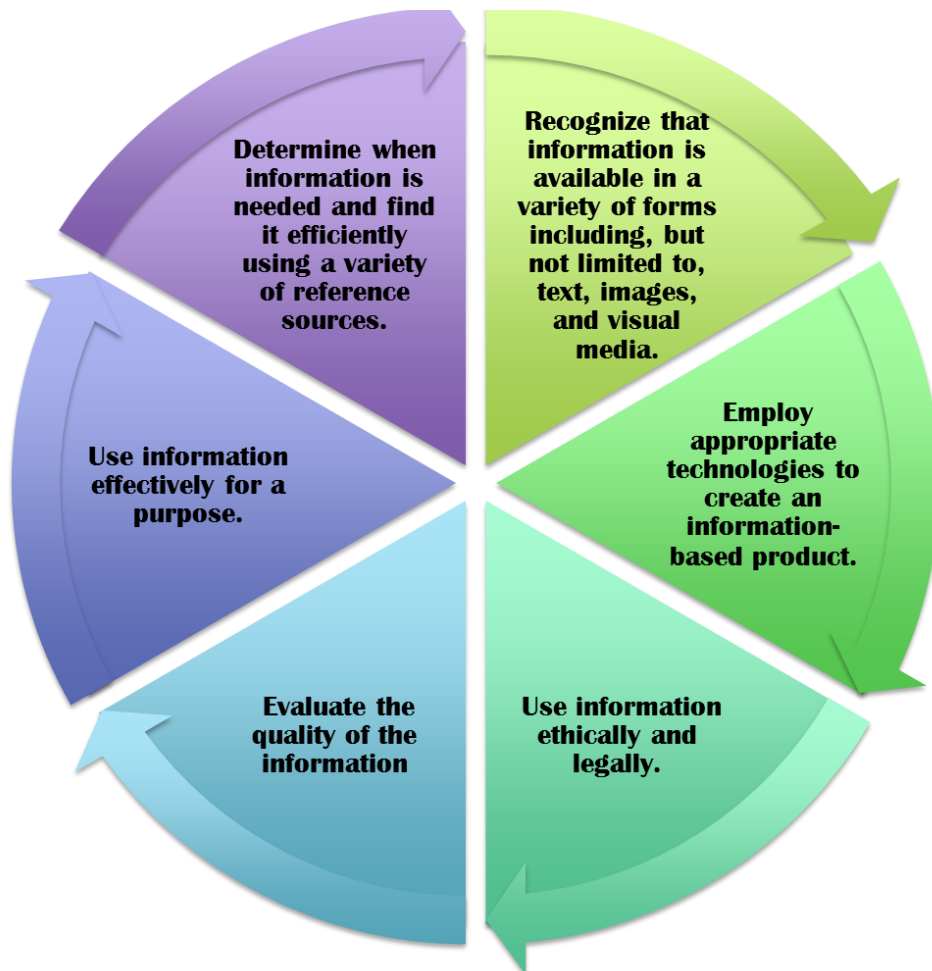
Writing
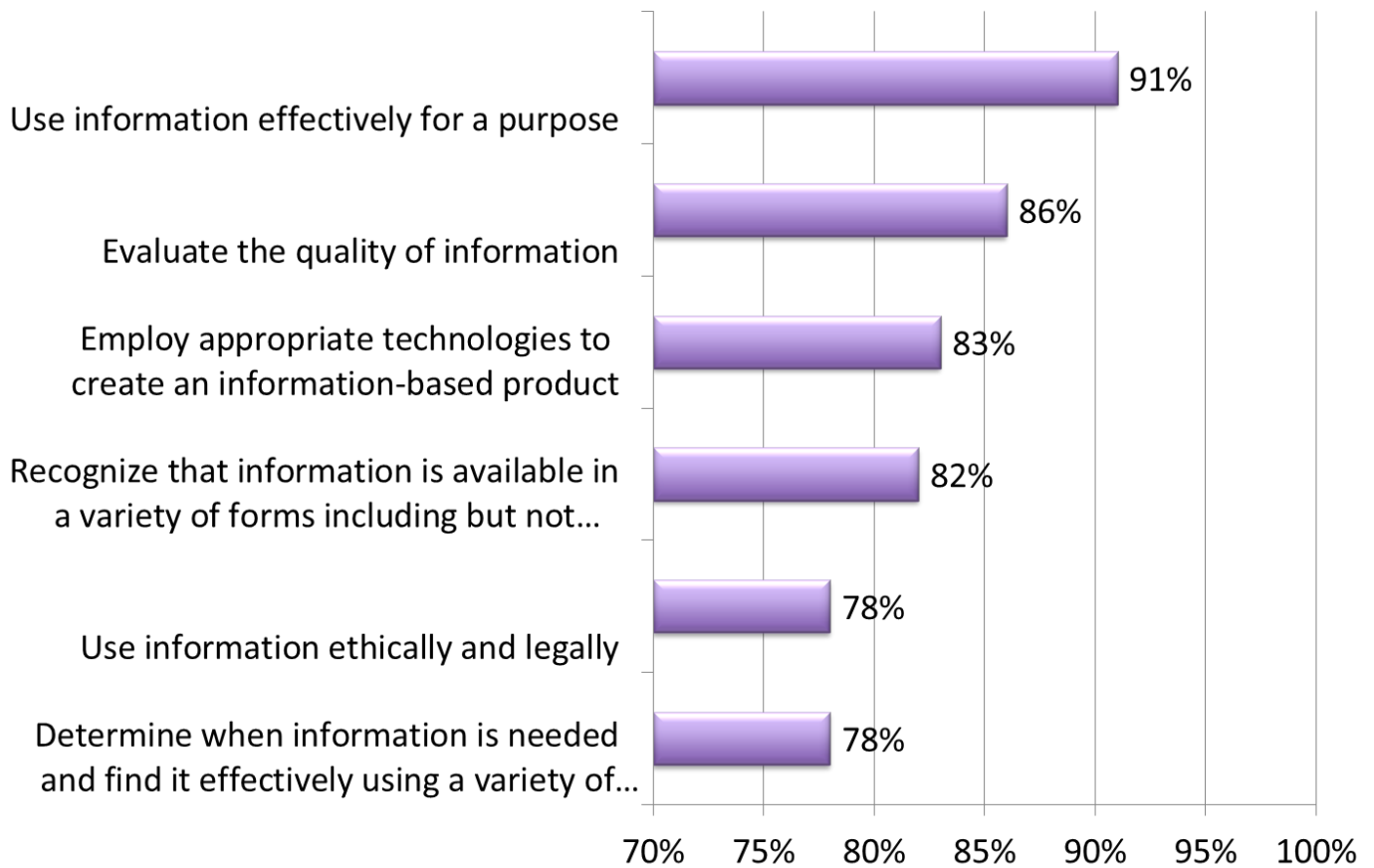
Human Communication

INFORMATION LITERACY

CLUSTER ONE: Foundations For Tomorrow

In order to assess students' *Information Literacy,* Cluster One administers the Madison Research Essentials Test (MREST). The MREST, a JMU-developed multiple-choice computer-based test, is administered in the proctored Testing Center. The MREST is embedded within the first-year basic communication course. First-year students are required to complete the MREST by the Friday before Spring Break.

Information Literacy Objectives

Determine when information is needed and find it efficiently using a variety of reference sources.

Recognize that information is available in a variety of forms including, but not limited to, text, images, and visual media.

Employ appropriate technologies to create an information-based product.

Use information ethically and legally.

Evaluate the quality of the information

Use information effectively for a purpose.

JMU Student Information Literacy Competency by Objective 2014-2015

Objective	Percentage
Use information effectively for a purpose	91%
Evaluate the quality of information	86%
Employ appropriate technologies to create an information-based product	83%
Recognize that information is available in a variety of forms including but not…	82%
Use information ethically and legally	78%
Determine when information is needed and find it effectively using a variety of…	78%

Two groups appear to need more significant interventions prior to taking the MREST the first time.
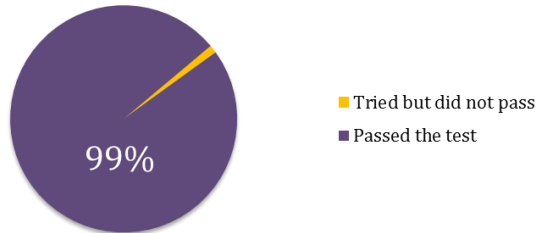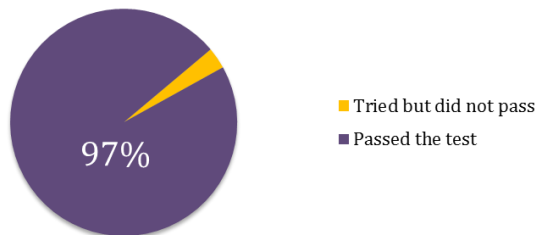
→ International Students

→ Student Athletes

MREST Passing Rate

2014-2015 First-Year Students
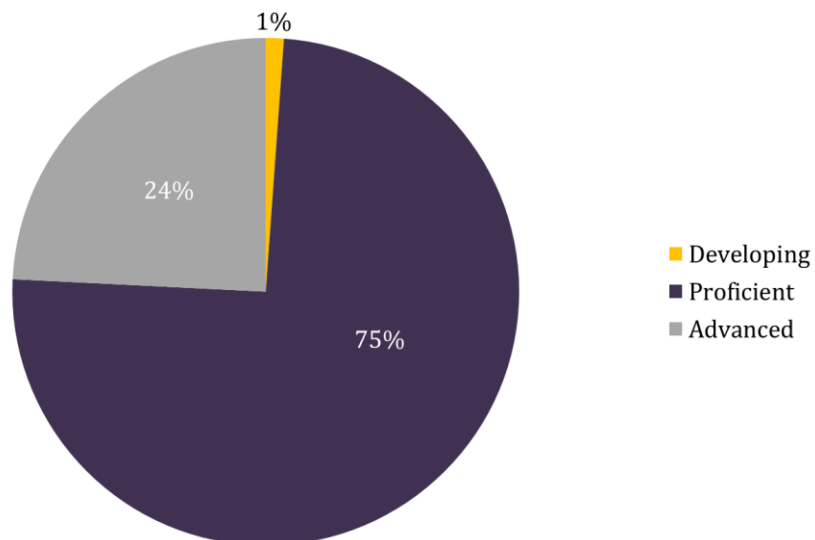### (total *N* = 4183)

Of the 2014-2015 students who took the MREST, how many passed?

99%

■ Tried but did not pass
■ Passed the test

2014-2015 Transfer Students
(total *N* = 261)

97%

■ Tried but did not pass
■ Passed the test

What proficiency level did 2014-2015 first-year students achieve on the MREST?

1%

24%

75%

■ Developing
■ Proficient
■ Advanced

First-Year Student Trends
Taken, Passed, No Attempt Over Time
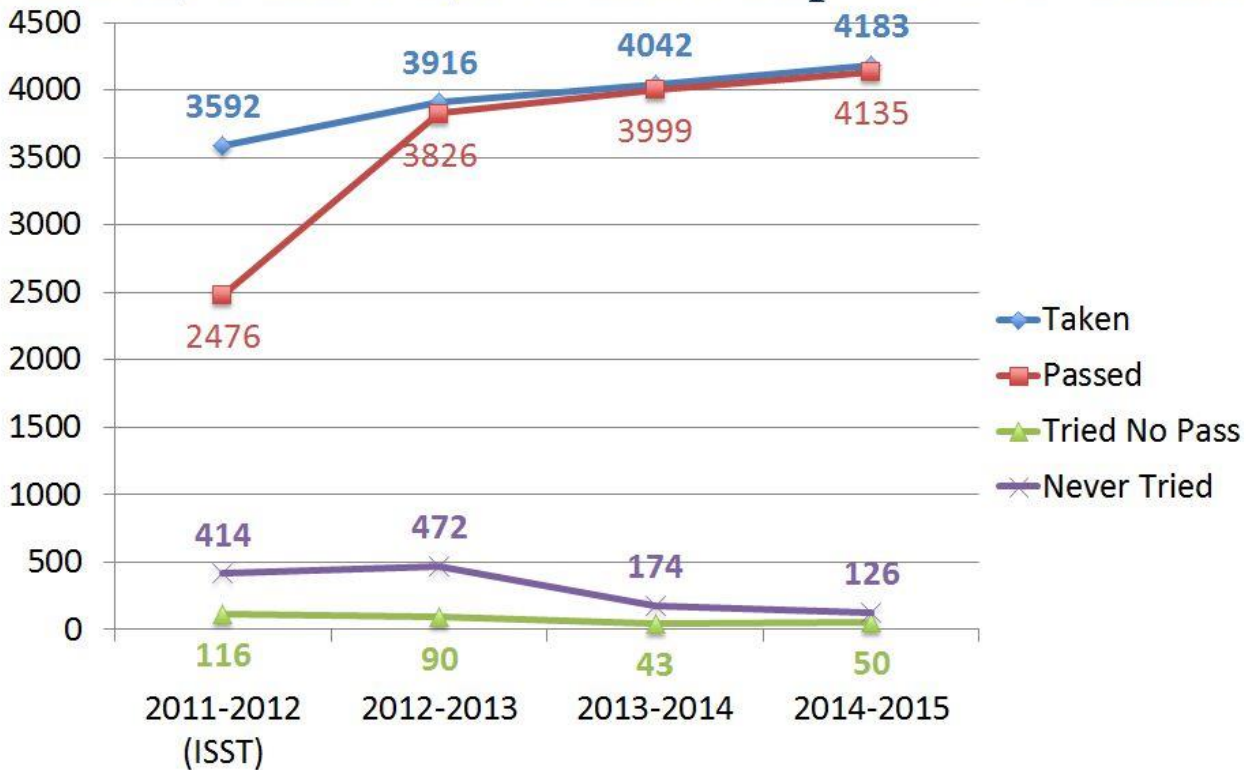
Through collaboration between the JMU Library and Cluster One, we have bolstered efforts to ensure that most students pass the test within their first year at JMU. Librarians continually monitor performance of the test and use results to adapt the MREST tutorial, enhancing the tutorial based on areas in which students have difficulty on the test. Other factors contributing to improved student performance on and completion of the test include: 1) embedding the MREST within the basic communication course, and 2) moving the deadline for MREST completion to the Friday prior to Spring Break.

Information Literacy Skills

Use information effectively for a purpose (91% correct)

Understand the function of research

Effectively incorporate the work of others

Choose appropriate sources for purpose, audience, and occasion

Evaluate the quality of information (86% correct)

Critically think about bias, relevance, and accuracy

Consider the appropriateness of information

Employ appropriate technologies to create an information-based product (83% correct)

- Understand the function of research
- Effectively incorporate the work of others
- Choose appropriate sources for purpose, audience, and occasion

Recognize that information is available in a variety of forms (82% correct)

- Extract information, regardless of format
- Recognize the difference between information and inference
- Think creatively about how information is displayed

Use information ethically and legally
(78% correct)

- Recognize information has value to its creator
- Distinguish between attributed and original ideas
- Properly cite utilized resources

Determine when information is needed and find it effectively using a variety of reference sources
(78% correct)

- Recognize gaps in knowledge
- Choose appropriate research tools
- Employ efficient searching techniques

How do skills addressed by the Critical-Thinking Assessment Test (CAT) map to the learning objectives addressed by the MREST?

Use information effectively for a purpose

- Summarize without inference (CAT Q1)
- Identify appropriate inferences (CAT Q8)
- Counter spurious claims (CAT Q6)
- Explain effect of change (CAT Q15)
- Apply relevant information (CAT Q11)
- Use information to identify solutions (CAT Q13)
- Provide alternative explanations (CAT Q9)
- Identify gaps in information (CAT Q7)

Determine when information is needed and find it effectively

- Summarize without inference (CAT Q1)
- Counter spurious claims (CAT Q6)
- Identify gaps in information (CAT Q7)

Information comes in a variety of forms

- Recognize relevant information (CAT Q10)

Evaluate the quality of information

- Recognize relevant information (CAT Q10)
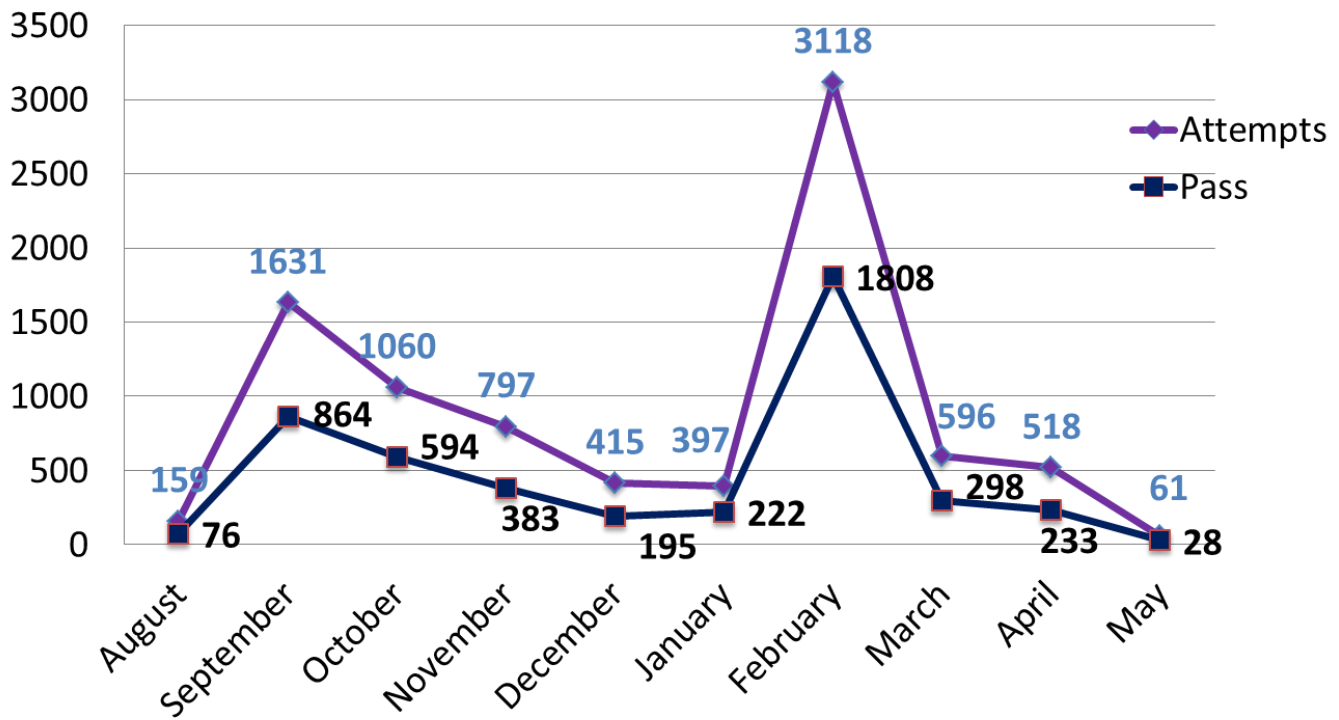- Evaluate spurious information (CAT Q5)

Use technology to create an information-based product

- Use information to explain solutions (CAT Q14)

Use information ethically and legally

- Evaluate spurious information (CAT Q5)
- Identify appropriate inference (CAT Q8)
- Counter spurious claims (CAT Q6)

MREST USE OF Testing Center Facilities by Month 2013-14

Attempts (purple line):
- August: 159
- September: 1631
- October: 1060
- November: 797
- December: 415
- January: 397
- February: 3118
- March: 596
- April: 518
- May: 61

Pass (dark blue line):
- August: 76
- September: 864
- October: 594
- November: 383
- December: 195
- January: 222
- February: 1808
- March: 298
- April: 233
- May: 28

MOST students passed on first attempt – 58% (2013-2014) and 62% (2014-2015)
Early March Deadline creates strong push for completion in February.